

BOROUGH OF SWINDON.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1941.

By LLYWELYN ROBERTS, M.D. (Lond.) D.P.H.

Report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector

For the Year 1941.

By F. H. BEAVIS.

Public Health Department,
Civic Offices,
SWINDON.

John Drew (Printers) Ltd., Swindon

1

BOROUGH OF SWINDON.

CIVIC OFFICES,
SWINDON.

To the Chairman and Members of the Health &c. Committee.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present an interim Annual Report for the year 1941. In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health this report is presented in an abridged form. The records which it has been the custom to provide are all kept and will be available for comparison in future and happier years.

It is with regret we have to record the death of Dr. Violet M. R. King, Assistant Medical Officer of Health, and Supervisor of Midwives, on the 20th June, 1941.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Registrar-General's estimate of population for 1941	70280
Census 1931	62401

Births and Deaths—

	Total		Rate	
	1941	1940	1941	1940
Live Births	1107	958	15.75	14.77
Deaths	803	995	11.43	15.35
Maternal deaths	1	5	—	—
From Puerperal Sepsis	—	3	—	2.89
Other Puerperal Causes	1	2	0.88	1.93
Infant deaths under one year	64	61	55.75	61.43
Deaths within 10 days of birth	26	25	—	—
Stillbirths	27	43	—	—
Deaths from diarrhoea in children under 2 years	4	5	—	—
Deaths from cancer	120	116	—	—

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

	No. of cases notified.		No. of deaths.	
	1941	1940	1941	1940
Scarlet Fever	269	332	1	2
Diphtheria	105	150	6	15
Paratyphoid	5	1	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	75	48	—	5
Pneumonia	111	180	22	33
Erysipelas	27	25	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever	19	41	7	5
Poliomyelitis	1	—	1	—
Encephalitis Lethargica	—	1	—	—
Dysentery	—	8	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	6	6	2	—
Measles	1027	643	2	—
Whooping Cough	330	45	3	1
Food Poisoning	—	1	—	—
Totals	1975	1481	44	61

EPIDEMIOLOGY.

The epidemic of **scarlet fever** and **diphtheria** noted in the Annual Report for 1940 continued into 1941. The **diphtheria** was of the severe type associated with "gravis" form of the diphtheria germ. There were six deaths from **diphtheria**. The one death from **scarlet fever** occurred in a case of scarlet fever which also suffered from diphtheria. **Pneumonia** continues to be a constant cause of a large number of deaths. This disease is severe at the extreme of life when life's candle burns dim. Although there has been a large number of cases of **puerperal pyrexia** it is pleasant to be able to report that there was no death from this cause. Many factors contributed to this high incidence of **puerperal pyrexia**—the large number of cases accommodated in the Maternity Home, which accepted many emergency cases and also the "black-out" which makes satisfactory ventilation difficult. **Cerebro-spinal fever**, although not as prevalent as in 1940 caused a number of deaths. Although the new drugs recently introduced make for a better prognosis in this disease it must still be classified as a very dangerous disease.

Tuberculosis.—This disease, which before the war appeared to be substantially under control has increased its toll of young life. Many factors have been invoked to explain this increase—the black-out, with its lack of ventilation, the stresses of modern times, difficulties of hospitalisation and so on, but it does show the precarious balance which exists between health and ill-health and brings home the importance of utilising and continuing to utilise every effort to preserve a healthy environment.

	1941	1940	1939
No. of cases notified	96	79	73
Respiratory Tuberculosis	71	58	53
Deaths from Respiratory Tuberculosis	27	30	20
Deaths from Tuberculous Meningitis	9	2	2
Total deaths	40	36	25
General death rate of all forms of Tuberculosis	0.57	0.56	0.41
Death Rate for Respiratory Tuberculosis	0.38	0.46	0.33

Scabies. In common with almost all other areas Swindon has to report an increase in scabies. This is a disease of households and for its proper treatment it is essential to survey and treat if necessary every member of a household where a case occurs.

Diphtheria Immunisation. An intensive campaign was undertaken at the beginning of the year for the preventive treatment of this disease and it is gratifying to record a very good response. The disease is most fatal in the early years of life and our further efforts must be particularly concentrated upon the children of pre-school age.

	Under 5	Over 5 but under 15	Total
No. of children immunised	988	3274	4262

Ambulance facilities for infectious disease, non-infectious and accident cases were maintained on a 24 hour service, but in view of the heavy calls on the service valuable help was obtained by the use of the A.R.P. ambulances in times of emergency.

The following journeys were made by the ambulances—

	1941	1940	1939
Transport of Infectious Cases	419	870	285
Transport of Non-Infectious Cases	907	846	616
Transport of Bedding for Disinfection and Laundry Articles	4072	1910	270
A.R.P. ambulance journeys for transport of Non-Infectious Cases	293	—	—

Bacteriological examinations. Increasing use was made of the E.M.S. pathological laboratory at Oxford and the following are particulars of specimens submitted for examination during 1941.

Nose, Throat and Vaginal swabs, chiefly for examination for haemolytic streptococci, from Maternity Home and midwives	167
Nose and Throat swabs from patients in Isolation Hospital for diphtheria virulence	14
Infectious disease investigations, including faeces, blood and urine specimens. Also investigations for food poisoning	132
Specimens sent away from Victoria Hospital chiefly in connection with incidence of scarlet fever	125
Specimens sent away from G.W.R. Hospital—diphtheria	27
Total	465

During the year 529 swabs were examined at the Isolation Hospital. 486 were negative and 43 positive. Also 321 swabs were examined at the clinic at 61 Eastcott Hill. 305 were negative and 16 positive.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Maternity Home.

	Borough	County	Evacuees	Total
No. of cases admitted	470	163	60	693
No. of cases delivered by—				
Midwives	298	118	39	455
Doctors	132	33	16	181
No. of cases in which no delivery took place	40	12	5	57

In 251 cases medical assistance was sought by midwives. 68 cases were notified as puerperal pyrexia and of these 33 were notifiable under the Puerperal Pyrexia Order.

In order to avoid overcrowding at the Maternity Home arrangements were made for evacuee expectant mothers to be accommodated in the Emergency Maternity Homes in the county. In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health the maximum number of bookings per month are limited to 40. 20 women evacuee expectant mothers were sent to Bradford-on-Avon.

Many staffing difficulties were experienced during the year and recommendations for increasing the staff and salaries were adopted by the Swindon Town Council.

Twelve pupil midwives completed the second part of their training and entered for the Final Examination for the Certificate of the Central Midwives Board.

Domiciliary midwifery.

The Extern Midwifery Service attached to the Maternity Home, consisting of one Sister and an Assistant appointed October, 1941, dealt with 258 cases and the four municipal midwives attended 312 deliveries.

Ante-natal and Post-natal clinics.

Five ante-natal and one post-natal clinics are provided by the Council.

No. of women who attended	579 ante-natal clinic
	61 post-natal clinic
Total	640

No. of attendances	Assistant M.O.H.'s. clinic	236
" "	at G.W.R. Medical Fund Society clinic	1287
" "	at Matron's clinic	1493
" "	at Specialist's clinic	1011

Dental Arrangements.

Arrangements have been made, with the approval of the Ministry of Health, for the dental treatment of expectant mothers and nursing mothers by the School Dental Surgeons.

SUMMARY OF WORK DONE DURING 1941.

No. of patients seen—Mothers	74
Children under school age	90
Total	164
No. of visits paid by patients	503
No. of administrations of gas	74
Number of teeth extracted under gas	203
No. of teeth extracted otherwise	154
No. of artificial dentures fitted	27

Orthopaedic Treatment.

During the year 40 Swindon children and 4 evacuees were referred from the Infant Welfare clinics and received treatment at the Orthopaedic clinic.

Child Life Protection—Public Health Act, 1936.

The six health visitors are the Infant Protection Visitors under the above Act. 22 boarded-out children were on the Register at the end of the year and 68 supervisory visits were made. No proceedings were taken during the year.

Health Visiting.

Changes occurred in the personnel of the health visitors and a Senior Health Visitor and School Nurse was appointed in August, 1941.

During 1941, 8257 visits were paid by the health visitors.

Treatment Centres and Clinics.

2034 separate infants attended the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres. The time-table of clinics was revised and arrangements made for the attendance of an Assistant Medical Officer at the Gorse Hill and Rodbourne Sub-Centres.

The Care of Children.

The war brings home the importance of saving infant lives and there is a consensus of opinion throughout the country that the infant death rate must and can be lowered.

This country which was one of the pioneers in the campaign for saving infant lives now has an infant death rate which compares unfavourably with many other countries. The external environment, embracing such things as cleanliness, proper clothing, good housing conditions, is of much less importance than the nutrition or internal economics of the child. The more stable adult body can withstand changes in foods and can even undergo some privation without suffering unduly. The same is not true about the child which has to grow and exist. For growth there are many special nutritional requirements such as vitamins and a plentiful supply of calcium and phosphorous. For this reason one welcomes the Government's policy of giving priority supplies of milk to children, pregnant and nursing mothers, and of providing young children with vitamins. The Food Officer and the Health Department have mutually assisted in the work. This work is one of the good things that have resulted from the war.

The mother is the pivot of all our efforts on the child's behalf and improved care for her before and at birth together with supervision and help for her when she is rearing the child should be our aim. It is frequently difficult for mothers to visit the health centres and efforts were made to provide more home visiting by the health visitors. Our work is more difficult now when women are often accepting the double burden of child-bearing and of supporting and running a home. At no previous time was the effort on her behalf more necessary.

Finally, I should like to express my gratitude for the help given me by the medical officers and all the other members of the staff, together with the support from the Chairman and members of the Committee.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant.

LLYWELYN ROBERTS,
Medical Officer of Health,
School Medical Officer,
Medical Supt. Isolation Hospital,
Medical Supt. Maternity Home.

Public Health Department
 Civic Offices,
 SWINDON.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

To the Chairman and Members of the Health Etc., Committee.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of submitting my Sixteenth Annual Report dealing with the work carried out by the Sanitary Department during the year ended December 31st, 1941.

There was no change in the personnel of the Department during the year, excepting that W. H. Paul (Clerk) and A. C. Mole (Disinfector) have joined H.M. Forces.

Appended hereto will be found the tables giving full particulars of the inspections made during the year in conformity with the requirements of the Ministry of Health. Owing to war conditions, the remarks usually added have been dispensed with.

F. H. BEAVIS,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

SANITARY STATISTICS, 1941.—TABLE OF NUISANCES RECORDED AND ABATED.

Nature of Complaint.	Not abated 1940	Visited during 1941	Total	Abated during 1941	Not abated at end of 1941
Choked drains	10	248	258	251	7
Defective drains	10	149	159	137	22
" traps	1	98	96	91	5
" sinks	22	60	82	52	30
" and dirty w.c.'s	33	190	223	208	15
" flushing-cisterns	10	87	97	62	35
" roofs	60	114	174	129	45
" eaves-gutters & rainwater pipes	19	86	105	67	38
" ceilings	30	73	103	62	41
" walls	66	188	254	186	68
Damp walls	44	107	151	105	46
Dirty rooms	138	354	492	360	132
Defective floors	42	124	166	112	54
" firegrates	28	46	74	50	24
" coppers	10	35	45	28	17
" yard paving	10	42	52	33	19
" forecourt paving	2	5	7	5	2
Offensive accumulations	7	64	71	67	4
" animals	—	16	16	15	1
Miscellaneous	155	589	744	556	188
TOTALS	697	2672	3369	2576	793

VISITS AND INSPECTIONS, 1941.

Work in course of construction	1432
Infectious Disease	597
Slaughterhouses	1387
Pig-killing on private premises	32
Butchers' Shops	260
Markets	449
Bakehouses	130
Ice-Cream Shops	41
Cow-sheds, milkshops and dairies	301
Fish shops	281
Food shops	451
Factories	73
Outworkers' premises	46
Common Lodging-houses	29
Re-visits	2111
Miscellaneous	2029
House-to-House inspections	1
Housing re-visits	4
Overcrowding Survey	63
	<hr/> 9717 <hr/>

BAKEHOUSES.

Number on Register	29
Nuisances found and abated	55

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

Dairies and Milkshops	53
Farms	18
Milk Purveyors from outside the Borough	48
	<hr/> 119 <hr/>
Nuisances found and abated	125

MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS) ORDER, 1936.

Licences in force within Borough.

<i>Designation.</i>	<i>Producers.</i>	<i>Bottlers.</i>	<i>Dealers.</i>
Tuberculin Tested	2	1	7
Accredited	8	—	3

There are four producers of Tuberculin Tested Milk, and five producers of Accredited Milk from outside the Borough retailing milk within the Borough.

<i>Designation.</i>	<i>Pasteurisers.</i>	<i>Dealers.</i>
Pasteurised	2	5

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938.

There are on the registers of the Department :—

Premises registered for the preparation or manufacture of sausages or potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food	81
Premises registered for the sale, manufacture or storage of Ice-cream	78
Butchers' Shops	80
Wholesale Meat Stores	2
Fried Fish Shops	33
Other Food Shops	274

SAMPLES TAKEN.

Informal	65
Formal	78
Unsatisfactory	6

PUBLIC HEALTH (MEAT) REGULATIONS 1924.

The following table shows the number of carcasses inspected during the year, together with approximate average per week :—

	Cattle		Calves.	Pigs.	Sheep.	Total.
	Cows.	Other Cattle.				
Total Inspected	3154	1454	1701	1946	13076	21331
Approximate average per week	60	28	33	37	251	410

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED, 1941.

	Cows.	Other Cattle	Calves	Pigs	Sheep and Lambs.
Killed and Inspected	3154	1454	1701	1946	13076
DISEASES OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS—					
Whole carcasses condemned	108	5	18	14	15
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	424	206	9	194	919
Approximate percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	16.88	14.51	1.59	10.69	7.41
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY—					
Whole Carcasses condemned	114	3	3	8	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	962	240	5	142	—
Approximate percentage of number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	34.11	16.71	.47	7.7	—

DISINFECTANTS.

Quantity Given :—	Fluid	96 gallons.
	Powder	1 qr. 27 lbs.

DISINFECTION.

Cases of Cancer	15
„ Tuberculosis	18
„ Scarlet Fever	227
„ Diphtheria	116
„ Pneumonia	2
Miscellaneous Cases	103
Vermineous Rooms	192
Library Books disinfected	47
Lots of Bedding disinfected	272
Miscellaneous articles disinfected	250
Lots of Bedding destroyed	34
Miscellaneous Articles destroyed	52
Animals destroyed	—

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

On Register	1
Number of persons for whom accommodation is provided :—	
Adults 109	Children 8
Inspections	29

RATS AND MICE (DESTRUCTION) ACT, 1919.

The following is a table showing the work carried out by your Officer under the above Act during the year under review :—

<i>Rats Caught.</i>	<i>Complaints Received.</i>	<i>Due to Defects of Drains or Sewers.</i>	<i>Due to Structural Defects.</i>
4580	303	21	6

DISINFECTION OF VEHICLES ETC. AT THE CATTLE MARKET.

Number Disinfected.

1076

Fees Received.

£ s. d.
26 18 0

HOUSING.

Houses Inspected	954
„ found to be defective	811
„ rendered fit by informal action	669
„ rendered fit by formal action	5
„ overcrowded	25
Persons affected	251
Overcrowding abated	2
Persons affected	24

